



[Home](#) › [Statistics](#) › [Labour](#) › [Jobs](#) › [Weekly Payroll Jobs](#) › Week ending 27 February 2021



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# Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia

Experimental estimates on the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on payroll jobs and wages, sourced from Single Touch Payroll (STP) data

Reference period Week ending 27 February 2021

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Released 16/03/2021

## On this page

[Key statistics](#)

[National](#)

[State and territory](#)

[Interactive maps](#)

[Sex](#)

[Age group](#)

[Industry](#)

[Employment size](#)

[Data downloads](#)

[Changes in this release](#)

[Post-release changes](#)

[Previous articles](#)

[Methodology](#)

[Media releases](#)

## Key statistics

Between the weeks ending 13 and 27 February 2021, payroll jobs increased 0.4%. The largest changes were in:

- Queensland and Western Australia (both up 0.6%)

- Administrative and support services and Education and training (both up 2.8%)

Total wages held steady (0.0%). The largest changes were in:

- Tasmania (down 0.8%)
- Administrative and support services and Public administration and safety (both up 2.8%)

## National

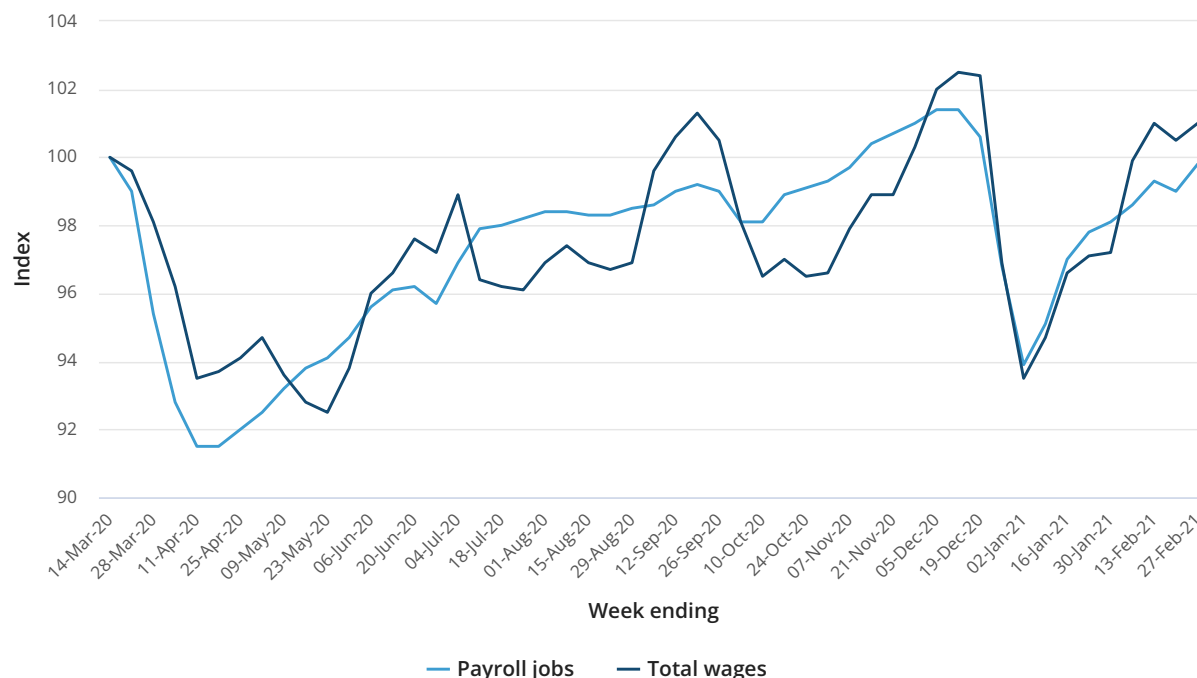
Between the weeks ending 14 March 2020 and 27 February 2021:

- Payroll jobs decreased by 0.2%
- Total wages increased by 1.0%

Between the weeks ending 13 and 27 February 2021:

- Payroll jobs increased by 0.4%, compared to an increase of 1.3% in the previous fortnight
- Total wages paid held steady at 0.0%, compared to an increase of 3.9% in the previous fortnight

Graph 1 - Payroll jobs and total wages, indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (a)



a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](#). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads.

## State and territory

Since the week ending 14 March 2020 the largest changes across states and territories were:

Payroll jobs:

- Northern Territory increased by 2.5%
- South Australia and Western Australia both increased by 1.5%

Total wages:

- Northern Territory increased by 4.2%
- South Australia increased by 2.7%

Between the weeks ending 13 and 27 February 2021 the largest changes were:

Payroll jobs:

- Western Australia and Queensland both increased by 0.6%
- Northern Territory increased by 0.5%

Total wages:

- Tasmania decreased by 0.8%
- South Australia increased by 0.5%

Table 1 - Percentage change by states and territories

	Payroll jobs		Total wages	
	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021
New South Wales	0.4%	-0.4%	-0.1%	0.3%
Victoria	0.4%	-1.3%	0.3%	2.4%
Queensland	0.6%	-0.2%	-0.3%	1.0%
South Australia	0.4%	1.5%	0.5%	2.7%
Western Australia	0.6%	1.5%	0.1%	-0.8%
Tasmania	0.0%	-1.0%	-0.8%	-0.5%
Northern Territory	0.5%	2.5%	0.2%	4.2%
Australian Capital Territory	0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	2.5%
Australia	0.4%	-0.2%	0.0%	1.0%

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](#). Weekly change data are available in Data downloads.

## Sub-state - payroll jobs

Updated estimates of payroll jobs by sub-state regions, were added to this release on Wednesday 17 March 2021.

Time series estimates of payroll jobs by sub-state regions, Statistical Area 4 (SA4) and Statistical Area 3 (SA3), are presented as index values through to the week ending 27 February 2021 in Table 5 of the Data downloads. These estimates are only updated in alternate releases.

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## SA4 regions

SA4 regions are specifically designed to reflect labour markets within each state and territory within population limits. In regional areas, SA4s tend to have lower populations (100,000 to 300,000), while in metropolitan areas, SA4s tend to have larger populations (300,000 to 500,000).

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## SA3 regions

SA3 regions generally have populations between 30,000 and 130,000 persons. They are often the functional areas of regional towns and cities with a population in excess of 20,000, or clusters of related suburbs around urban commercial and transport hubs within the major urban areas.

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For more information see [Statistical Geography \(https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Geography\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Geography); or [Australian Statistical Geography Standard, Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2016 \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.001\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.001).

## Interactive maps

The interactive maps were updated to the week ending 27 February 2021, as part of this release on Friday 19 March 2021.

[Interactive maps \(https://absstats.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=cd4fbdf3c39f496c830fccdd084fbac2\)](https://absstats.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=cd4fbdf3c39f496c830fccdd084fbac2) of SA4 and SA3 regions present

change in payroll jobs from the week ending 14 March 2020 for each week up to the week ending 27 February 2021. Map data are updated in alternate releases to coincide with the availability of sub-state estimates.

Percentage change values can differ between sub-state and state and territory regions. State and territory totals include records with 'unknown' sub-state characteristics. The differences may increase in size in finer levels of data. For more information, see the Data components, totals and index calculation section of [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions).

SA4 and SA3 boundaries presented accord with the [Australian Statistical Geography Standard, Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2016 \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.001\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.001).

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## How to use the interactive map:

- Select: Geographical area can be selected using the Statistical Area 3 (SA3) or Statistical Area 4 (SA4) upper tabs.
- Search: the magnifying glass icon opens the search function. It is set to look for locations such as addresses, suburbs and postcodes contained within an SA4 or SA3 region.
- Reference week: the date slider at the bottom of the map can be moved to select a particular week of interest, or see changes over time.
- Data: on the relevant map, an SA4 or SA3 can be selected to view the underlying data. The time series index estimates for SA4 and SA3s can be found in Table 5 of the Data downloads.
- If the maps do not load successfully, please try refreshing the page.

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## Sex

Since the week ending 14 March 2020:

Payroll jobs:

- Worked by males decreased by 2.5%
- Worked by females decreased by 1.2%

Total wages:

- Payments to females increased by 2.9%
- Payments to males decreased by 1.3%

Between the weeks ending 13 and 27 February 2021:

Payroll jobs:

- Worked by females increased 0.4%
- Worked by males increased by 0.3%

Total wages:

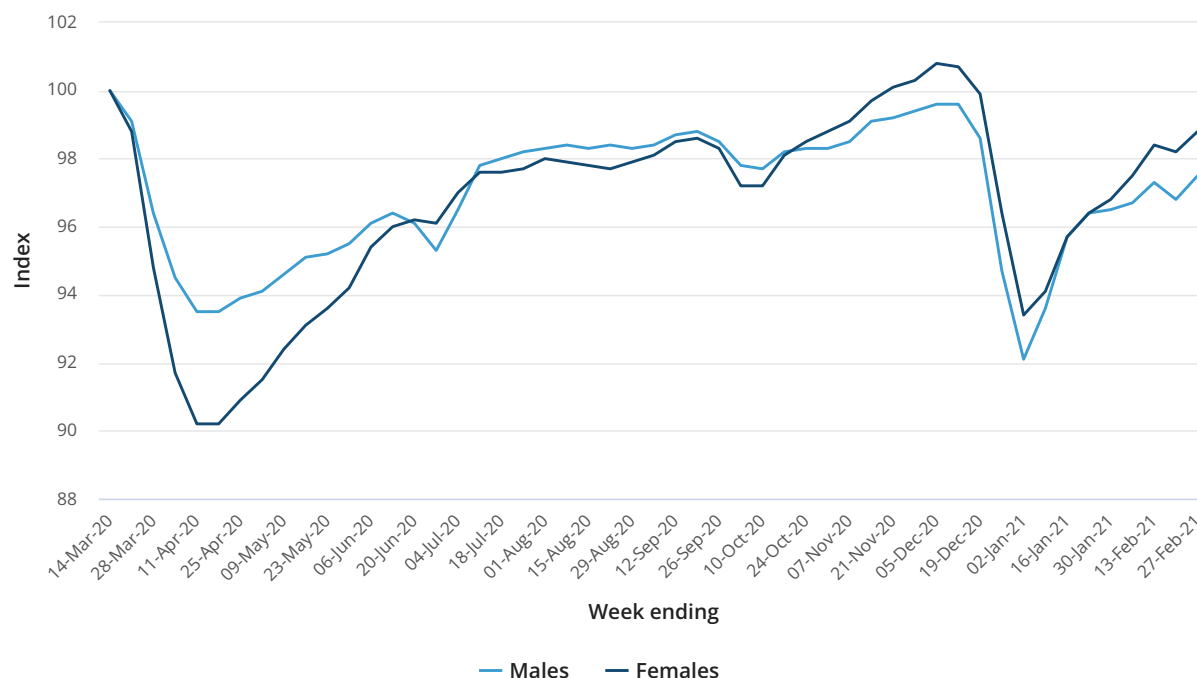
- Payments to females increased by 0.4%
- Payments to males decreased by 0.3%

**Table 2 - Percentage change by sex**

Payroll jobs		Total wages		
	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021
Males	0.3%	-2.5%	-0.3%	-1.3%
Females	0.4%	-1.2%	0.4%	2.9%
All persons	0.4%	-0.2%	0.0%	1.0%

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](#). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads.

Graph 4 - Payroll jobs by sex, indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (a)



a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](#). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads section.

## Age group

Since the week ending 14 March 2020 the largest changes across age groups were:

Payroll jobs:

- Worked by people aged 60-69 and 70 years and over both increased by 3.8%
- Worked by people aged 20-29 decreased by 1.6%

Total wages:

- Payments to people aged 70 years and over increased by 7.8%
- Payments to people aged 15-19 increased by 6.3%



Between the weeks ending 13 and 27 February 2021 the largest changes across age groups were:

Payroll jobs:

- Worked by people aged 15-19 increased by 2.4%
- Worked by people aged 70 years and over increased by 0.8%

Total wages:

- Payments to people aged 15-19 increased by 0.5%
- Payments to people aged 50-59 decreased by 0.2%

**Table 3 - Percentage change by age group**

	Payroll jobs		Total wages	
	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021
15-19 year olds	2.4%	0.4%	0.5%	6.3%
20-29 year olds	0.3%	-1.6%	-0.1%	1.6%
30-39 year olds	0.2%	0.4%	-0.2%	1.4%
40-49 year olds	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	-0.1%
50-59 year olds	0.3%	1.1%	-0.2%	0.7%
60-69 year olds	0.5%	3.8%	-0.1%	5.1%
Aged 70 years and over	0.8%	3.8%	0.2%	7.8%
All persons	0.4%	-0.2%	0.0%	1.0%

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](#). Weekly change data are available in Data downloads.

## 5 year age groups

Time series estimates of payroll jobs by 5 year age groups (presented as index values) up to the week ending 27 February 2021 are available in Table 8 of the Data downloads.

## Industry

Since the week ending 14 March 2020 the largest changes across industry were:

Payroll jobs:

- Accommodation and food services decreased by 11.6%
- Information media and telecommunications decreased by 7.4%

Total wages:

- Mining decreased by 14.1%
- Accommodation and food services decreased by 10.2%

Between the weeks ending 13 and 27 February 2021 the largest changes across industry were:

Payroll jobs:

- Administrative and support services and Education and training both increased by 2.8%
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing decreased by 1.8%

Total wages:

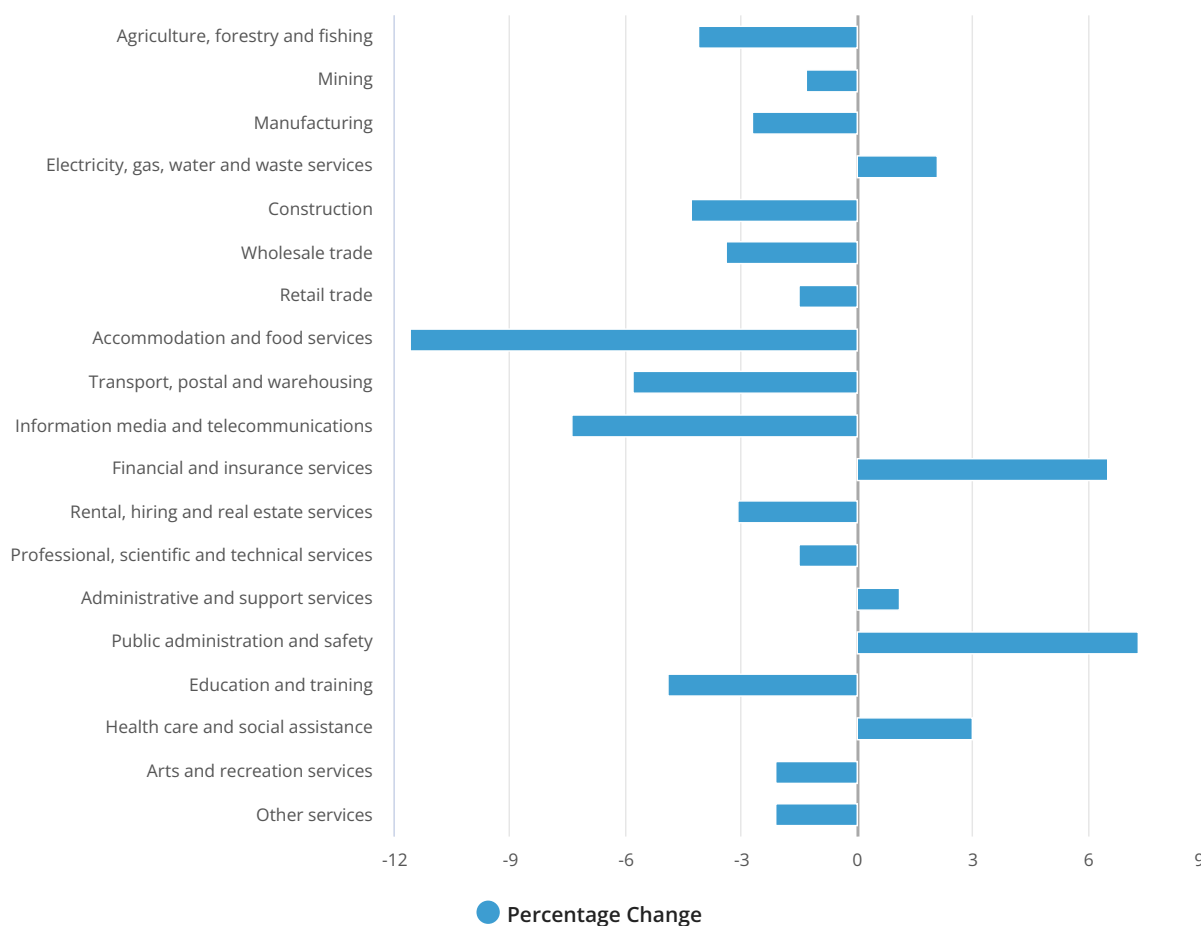
- Administrative and support services and Public administration and safety both increased by 2.8%
- Information media and telecommunications increased by 2.7%

Table 4 - Percentage change by industry

	Payroll jobs		Total wages	
	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021	Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (a)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	-1.8%	-4.1%	-2.1%	0.9%
Mining (b)	-0.2%	-1.3%	1.4%	-14.1%
Manufacturing	0.5%	-2.7%	0.5%	-1.5%
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	0.7%	2.1%	2.3%	4.1%
Construction	-0.5%	-4.3%	-1.4%	-3.4%
Wholesale trade	-0.6%	-3.4%	-0.4%	-3.7%
Retail trade	0.1%	-1.5%	-2.5%	-1.0%
Accommodation and food services	0.9%	-11.6%	-0.4%	-10.2%
Transport, postal and warehousing	0.2%	-5.8%	-1.7%	-7.8%
Information media and telecommunications	0.2%	-7.4%	2.7%	3.3%
Financial and insurance services	0.4%	6.5%	-0.3%	-0.4%
Rental, hiring and real estate services	0.2%	-3.1%	-0.3%	3.0%
Professional, scientific and technical services	-1.0%	-1.5%	-1.2%	1.8%
Administrative and support services	2.8%	1.1%	2.8%	6.6%
Public administration and safety	1.2%	7.3%	2.8%	5.5%
Education and training	2.8%	-4.9%	1.2%	0.2%
Health care and social assistance (c)	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Arts and recreation services	0.4%	-2.1%	-1.0%	-0.1%
Other services	-0.2%	-2.1%	-1.1%	2.9%
All industries	0.4%	-0.2%	0.0%	1.0%

- a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. Weekly change data are available in Data downloads.
- b. The Mining industry wages estimates in March and September may include annual bonuses. Please refer to the seasonality section in [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions) for further information.
- c. A smoothing treatment has been applied to the Health care and social assistance payroll jobs and wages estimates through February 2021. Please refer to the reporting variability section in [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions) for further information.

**Graph 5 - Percentage change in payroll jobs by Industry between 14 March 2020 and 13 February 2021**



## Industry subdivision - Payroll jobs

Time series estimates of payroll jobs by industry subdivision (presented as index values) up to the week ending 13 February 2021 are available in Table 6 of the Data downloads. These estimates are only updated in alternate releases.

The subdivision level is the second broadest grouping of industries within the [Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf>)

[/mf/1292.0](#)). Industry subdivisions are built up from the industry groups which, in turn, are built up from industry classes.

## Employment size

As of this release, the graph presenting payroll jobs by employment size will no longer be included. The source data continues to be available in Table 7 of the Data downloads.

The following experimental estimates present payroll jobs by employment size between the weeks ending 14 March 2020 and 27 February 2021.

Care should be exercised when focusing on recent movements in payroll jobs by employment size, as they are subject to higher than usual levels of revision (over a longer period) than other estimates. This is particularly the case for small employers (with under 20 employees). Further information is presented on the impact of revisions to the small employers (under 20 employees) index in the [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](#) section of the Methodology (under Variation in revisions).

Table 5 - Percentage change in Payroll jobs by state and territory, by employment size as at 14 March 2020 (a)

		Change between 13 Feb 2021 and 27 Feb 2021 (b)	Change between 14 Mar 2020 and 27 Feb 2021
Under 20 employees	New South Wales	-1.1%	-3.6%
	Victoria	-0.9%	-3.8%
	Queensland	-0.3%	-0.3%
	South Australia	-0.6%	0.6%
	Western Australia	-0.4%	1.1%
	Tasmania	-0.5%	-0.9%
	Northern Territory	-0.5%	3.0%
	Australian Capital Territory	-1.9%	-1.5%
	Australia	-0.8%	-2.1%
20-199 employees	New South Wales	0.4%	-2.7%
	Victoria	0.3%	-4.3%
	Queensland	0.4%	-1.5%
	South Australia	0.6%	-1.3%
	Western Australia	-0.1%	-0.8%
	Tasmania	0.2%	-5.6%
	Northern Territory	0.4%	-1.1%
	Australian Capital Territory	0.0%	-2.0%
	Australia	0.3%	-2.7%
200 employees and over	New South Wales	1.1%	0.0%
	Victoria	1.1%	-0.7%
	Queensland	1.2%	-2.4%
	South Australia	1.1%	0.8%
	Western Australia	1.5%	0.5%
	Tasmania	0.2%	-1.3%
	Northern Territory	1.0%	2.4%
	Australian Capital Territory	1.0%	-0.7%
	Australia	1.2%	-0.6%

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-27-february-2021#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/dossbytitle/AC79D33ED6045E88CA25706E0074E77A?OpenDocument).

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## Employment size source

Employment size variables were determined from [ABS Business Register \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/dossbytitle/AC79D33ED6045E88CA25706E0074E77A?OpenDocument\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/dossbytitle/AC79D33ED6045E88CA25706E0074E77A?OpenDocument) data. The ABS Business Register is populated using administrative data from the Australian Business Register (ABR) and business data from the Australian Tax Office (ATO). Data on the structures of large and complex businesses are also collected by ABS. The ABS Business Register is updated regularly and a frame of business, containing business characteristic information, is produced quarterly for use in the production of statistics.

The March 2020 quarterly frame was used to determine employment size for businesses reporting their payroll via STP and subsequently allocate their reported payroll jobs against. Once a payroll job is allocated to an employment size category, it is held constant against that category over time. By using the March 2020 quarter frame and holding employment size categorisation constant, the ABS is able to present information about the change in payroll jobs based on the employment size of businesses before Australia recorded its 100th confirmed COVID-19 case on 14 March 2020.

Businesses which are newly created after March 2020 are unable to be assigned a size and are subsequently excluded from the index calculation of employment size groups. These 'new' businesses are included in the calculation of all sizes category (for state and territory, and national level estimates). The number of STP reporting businesses 'born' since Australia recorded its 100th confirmed COVID-19 in March 2020 is considered small, hence their exclusion is expected to have minimal impact on the estimates. The ABS exploring how to incorporate newly created businesses into the employment size estimates and may include them in a future release.

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## Data downloads

Table 1: National spotlight

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[87.63 KB]

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Table 2: State and territory spotlight



[!\[\]\(a3ea015cc5581cad732d1eb81613fe7b\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download XLSX\*\*](#)  
[\[415.08 KB\]](#)

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### Table 3: Industry spotlight

[!\[\]\(919a2cb85b99741a73c0c31a427236a8\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download XLSX\*\*](#)  
[\[714.96 KB\]](#)

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### Table 4: Payroll jobs and wages indexes

[!\[\]\(c3d993ca47bfe2a953c700506ce31fa0\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download XLSX\*\*](#)  
[\[2.51 MB\]](#)

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### Table 5: Sub-state - Payroll jobs indexes

Estimates of payroll jobs by Statistical Area 4 (SA4) and Statistical Area 3 (SA3) to the week ending 27 February 2021, as updated on Wednesday 17 March 2021.

These estimates are updated in alternate releases and will be next updated on Wednesday 14 April 2021.

[!\[\]\(17413706fd4997a1a4bdf85c6864eee1\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download XLSX\*\*](#)  
[\[216.71 KB\]](#)

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### Table 6: Industry subdivision - Payroll jobs indexes

Estimates of payroll jobs by industry subdivision to the week ending 13 February 2021, as updated on Thursday 4 March 2021.

These estimates are updated in alternate releases and will be next updated on Wednesday 31 March 2021.

[!\[\]\(4b7a79268f6ba26c1471d4232fffa85a\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download XLSX\*\*](#)  
[\[71.4 KB\]](#)

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### Table 7: Employer characteristics - Payroll jobs index

Previously titled Employment size - Payroll jobs index

[!\[\]\(4f6bf54ae7e4144a72d78316053e412d\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download XLSX\*\*](#)  
[\[46.83 KB\]](#)

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### Table 8: Jobholder characteristics - Payroll jobs index

Contains estimates of payroll jobs by 5 year age groups, available in this release since 3 March 2021.

[!\[\]\(1f56542a42e2413e44a2b2023033aa2e\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download XLSX\*\*](#)  
[\[51.83 KB\]](#)

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### All data cubes

Updated to include Table 5 as released on Wednesday 17 March 2021.

[!\[\]\(bff896c19919791b89ab521f039b410a\_img.jpg\) \*\*Download ZIP\*\*](#)  
[\[2.97 MB\]](#)

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## Changes in this release

The following section was updated in this release:

- Employment size: graph presenting payroll jobs by employment size no longer included

The following section of the Methodology was updated in this release:

- Data limitations and revisions: new section, Variation in revisions

## Post-release changes

19 March 2021: Interactive maps updated to the week ending 27 February 2021.

17 March 2021: Sub-state - Payroll jobs indexes (Table 5 of the Data downloads) were updated to the week ending 27 February 2021.

## Previous articles

Previously published articles and information of interest are linked below:

- [Year-end data variability \(/articles/year-end-data-variability\)](/articles/year-end-data-variability) provides some context on seasonality and seasonal variation
- [Secondary jobs \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/week-ending-17-october-2020#secondary-jobs\)](/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/week-ending-17-october-2020#secondary-jobs) provides insight into multiple jobholders
- [Incorporating JobKeeper supported payments into Weekly payroll jobs and wages in Australia \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/week-ending-30-may-2020#incorporating-jobkeeper-supported-back-payments-into-weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-in-australia\)](/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/week-ending-30-may-2020#incorporating-jobkeeper-supported-back-payments-into-weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-in-australia) describes how JobKeeper payments are included

## Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6160.0.55.001.

## Methodology

[Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia methodology, Week ending 27 February 2021](#)